

ER 11-8954/a

12 NOV 1959

✓
Cauley
Mr. John R. Cauley
KANSAS CITY STAR
610 Albee Building
Washington 5, D.C.

Dear Mr. Cauley:

I was most pleased with your story about this Agency, which you wrote for the STAR, and for your thoughtfulness in sending a clipping of it via Colonel Grogan.

It was also good to see again my old friend, Roy Roberts. My best wishes to you both.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles
Director

o/g
O/DCI/SJGrogan; Abi (10 Nov 59)
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13 NOV 1959

Mr. W. F. Cody
Dorr, Hand, Whittaker & Watson
61 Broadway
New York 6, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Cody:

On behalf of the Director I should like to acknowledge and thank you for your letter of October 31 concerning [redacted]

[redacted] is not now and never has been a member of this Organization.

We very much appreciate your thoughtfulness in bringing this matter to our attention.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Assistant to the Director

O/DCI, [redacted] rad 10 Nov 59
Rewritten: FMC:rad 12 Nov 59

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Via Reading

THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM

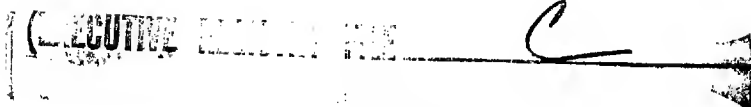
Address

by

JAMES B. CONANT

on receiving the
WOODROW WILSON AWARD
FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
from the
WOODROW WILSON FOUNDATION

November 12, 1959



Printed as a public service by the
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THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM

by

JAMES B. CONANT

May I first of all attempt to express my deep appreciation of the honor which the Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation have bestowed upon me. Anyone would count it a high privilege to have his name added to the list of those who on previous occasions have been thus singled out. But for one who has spent almost his entire life in education, it is an especially pleasing honor to receive an award carrying the name of Woodrow Wilson, for, as you are all aware, Woodrow Wilson was an imaginative, courageous college president, as well as a profound and influential scholar, before he became President of the United States.

Now it might be appropriate for me to acknowledge the honor I am receiving by speaking on some educational topic connected with Wilson's interests as an educator. Yet, because Woodrow Wilson was the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces when I, as a young chemist, entered the service of our Government in World War I, today's meeting brings to mind matters that are not usually associated with the function of universities. I recall President Wilson's War Message to Congress, the rapid transformation of our colleges, the first attempts at mobilizing scientists to assist the military, chiefly in connection with gas warfare. It was my first introduction to what has been, alas, a recurring topic throughout the last four decades—the relation between education and the defense of the United

States. The connection is not merely one that stems from the patriotic duty of teachers to do their part in time of war. What has been involved each time the international situation has been threatening has been the very existence of our kind of educational institutions. The basic issue has always been freedom—freedom as we Americans understand that word. And if this freedom should disappear, the fundamental premises underlying our educational thinking would be completely altered. If anyone doubts this statement, let him examine what the Nazis did to the German schools and universities or read carefully the theses recently published by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union in which occur such sentences as the following: "The study of Marxism-Leninism must bear a creative, aggressive, and militant character. We must rear our youth in the spirit of irreconcilability with bourgeois ideology."

With such thoughts before me, I have entitled my brief address "The Defense of Freedom." It is my thesis this afternoon that freedom in this year 1959 is as severely threatened as at any time in our history and threatened in ways that make it difficult for people to understand the nature and magnitude of the menace.

Let me explain. I am referring, of course, to external threats to our freedom. Internal threats have from time to time been serious; I do not in the least wish to minimize this fact. There were such threats in the 1930s when many people wondered if the doctrines of Naziism and Fascism or Communism would become dominant in a country suffering vast unemployment in a prolonged period of depres-

sion. These internal threats, however, were soon dwarfed by the dangers inherent in the rapid growth of the military strength of Hitler's Germany. We saw freedom extinguished first in Austria, then in Czechoslovakia, then in Poland, then, after the fall of France, on almost the whole continent of Europe. Shortly thereafter, the United States entered World War II, and the defense of freedom by military action became the overriding concern of all connected with colleges and universities.

After the surrender of the Axis powers, it seemed to many Americans that our freedom was secure—secure at least from external threats. The illusion was short-lived. The Coup d'Etat in Prague, the Berlin Blockade, the Korean War demonstrated the kind of world in which we lived—a divided world; and the division was wide and deep. The issue was freedom. What we saw was clear evidence of the determination of a powerful group of ruthless men to keep on pushing back the frontiers of freedom. Before we Americans had fully realized the nature of the postwar world, what we now call the Satellite Nations had succumbed, the Soviet ambitions for all Germany were evident, and the mainland of China was organized as a vigorous ally of the Soviet Union. In the late 1940s we started reversing our traditional role, and this country came forward as the most powerful defender of freedom. I need only remind you of the historic decisions of our Government—the implementation of the Marshall Plan, the defiance of Soviet ambitions in Berlin, our response to military aggression in Korea, the establishment of NATO, the strong reinforcement of our troops in Europe.

As a consequence of these events on the international scene, we in the United States, today, are living in a period radically different from any in our past. Military strategy, new weapons, foreign policy, global economic problems, have become matters which affect deeply each and every one of us. This is a grim period, no doubt about it. Indeed, it is so grim that, for those of us who were of school age before World War I, the facts of life today would have been too terrible to be believed. An idea we took for granted—freedom—we now see challenged by a vast expansive force; two great blocks of nations are standing in opposition, the leaders provided with weapons any one of which could destroy a single city. Our existence and our freedom are both in danger. This seems to me an obvious, if highly unpleasant, fact.

Yet, as I have traveled around the country during the last two years, with few exceptions I have sensed no awareness of the nature of our peril. For the most part, I have encountered little but complacency. As only one example, I can cite some of my experiences in arguing about educational matters. I have met all too often a resistance to starting any discussion from the premise that we, as a nation, are in danger. There is in certain circles an unwillingness to agree that there is an urgency today which is a consequence of our struggle with the Soviet Union, a reluctance to talk in terms of the national need. But let me make it plain that the educators I have in mind are by no means exceptional in their reactions. How many of us as citizens, as voters, and as taxpayers are ready to face the consequences of

the international situation? To what degree does one find the sense of a national emergency as one talks with various types of persons? Are the discussions of the complex matter of taxation carried on in the same spirit that would prevail in time of war? The answer is clearly "no." Yet the necessity for spending money for defense (using this term in its broadest sense) is obviously as pressing as though we were engaged in an actual armed conflict.

The high degree of complacency of which I speak is compounded, in a curious way, with despair—despair at understanding the altered military situation, and hence a feeling of almost hopeless resignation and an unwillingness to discuss the choices which lie before the American people. To my mind there are two basic difficulties in analyzing the present situation. These difficulties tend to block a realistic, calm discussion of the foreign policy of the United States, and these blocks in turn lead to the attitudes of indifference to which I have just referred.

One difficulty involves the nature of the struggle; the other is a consequence of the terrifying nature of new weapons. As to the first, it is hard for Americans to envisage what would be involved if we surrendered to Soviet Imperialism—surrendered at once or step by step. The basic issue of freedom is too easily obscured. This is particularly true today. Russia is now relatively accessible to travelers and reporters. The picture we receive of the Soviet Union is that of a country in which many well educated people appear to be quite satisfied with their lot—particularly scientists

and engineers. (The Communist Party has been clever enough to provide a large degree of initiative and freedom for this group of well-trained men.) The process of "Sovietization" in Russia was completed some years ago; the dissenting elements have been long since completely crushed. The significant scene for us, therefore, is *not* the Soviet Union but a land which is in process of being transformed to fit the Soviet pattern. Such a land is the Soviet Zone in Germany, and we can obtain a glimpse of what Sovietization is really like by looking through the Iron Curtain at a place where the Curtain is transparent—namely, the City of Berlin. I wish all citizens of the United States could spend a few days in that city as I did, once again, last month. I wish they could hear the tales of the refugees who, escaping from the tyranny of the Communist rule, continue to come to Free Berlin at the rate of about four hundred a day. I wish everyone could hear, as I did recently, what a refugee has to tell about life in a society in process of being Sovietized. (Each refugee, you know, is examined by a small committee in the refugee center before being certified as a *bona fide* refugee and being flown out to the Federal Republic of Germany to safety and to a job.) Secret police, arbitrary arrests, long sentences, demands to spy on friends and relatives, pressures of all sorts, such is the pattern imposed on the unfortunate inhabitants of the Soviet Zone of Germany—the so-called German Democratic Republic.

The American public should be far better informed than it is about the realities of life on the other side of the Iron Curtain in Ger-

many. If people knew the facts of what has been going on for years in the Soviet Zone of Germany, they would be in a better position to judge the nature of our struggle with Soviet Imperialism. Furthermore, they would then be under no illusions about the aims of Soviet policy in Europe, for the Communist leaders in Eastern Germany have repeatedly stated quite frankly that they intend not only to neutralize Berlin but eventually to take over all of Germany itself.

I shall not take your time further to spell out the contrast between freedom and slavery which is the fundamental issue. Everyone here is well aware of what would be involved in a step-by-step surrender. I only wish a majority of Americans were equally alert and really comprehended what is at stake in a contest which shows no signs of terminating. Oskar Morgenstern in his recent book "The Question of National Defense" has written: "Widespread death and destruction are a certainty if a large-scale war is our fate. But it would take a man with great power of illusion to see an acceptable alternative in surrender, and to see surrender in a better light than death."

This statement sums up what I have been trying to say in the last ten minutes and leads me to a discussion of the second difficulty which blocks a calm discussion of our foreign policy. I refer to the horrifying nature of the new weapons. To mention thermonuclear bombs and rockets is to freeze the conversation in many gatherings. "The prospects are too terrible to contemplate" is the usual response to anyone who attempts to start a discussion of

military strategy. Yet, as a free people, we surely must face up to what is involved in the technological military developments of our time. And as Professor Morgenstern makes plain, the choice should *not* be between surrender and large-scale war. It is our job so to arrange matters in this country and in the free world that this will *not* be the choice before us.

Let us see what are the outlines of the steps which are required. First and foremost must come the assurance of our physical survival. And to make the illustration relatively simple, let me anticipate the course of technological development and assume that we are living in a period when thermonuclear weapons will be delivered by rockets, either intercontinental or of more limited range—a period when the airplane is no longer the vehicle for carrying the thermonuclear bombs. Having no access to classified information, I make no prophecy as to when this period will be reached, but it seems safe to say that at least by 1970 we will be living in this kind of fearful world. Under such conditions, there is one essential for our survival as a free nation, and that is that we possess an invulnerable system of retaliatory power and *that the Soviets believe the system to be invulnerable.*

What do I mean by these words “invulnerable system” of retaliatory power? I mean that we must possess a system of rockets which will survive any thermonuclear attack by an aggressor, even assuming that the aggressor can concentrate all his forces against our own delivery system for thermonuclear weapons. What do I mean by “retaliatory power”? I mean that such a system surviving a thermonuclear bar-

rage would be able in retaliation to deliver thermonuclear weapons to such an extent and in such a way that at least three-fourths of the industrial complexes of the Soviet Union would be utterly destroyed.

The system will be invulnerable because of the dispersion and the mobility of the many individual components. As an example of mobility one may mention the type of missile and missile system which is to be embodied in the Polaris submarine, which has been announced as operational in 1960 with ability to discharge sixteen thermonuclear bombs. Similar mobility is feasible as part of the dispersion of the retaliatory system on the Continent of Europe, which presupposes, of course, the continuation of NATO as a vital organization.

The development of such an invulnerable system for the near future is clearly a number one priority in terms of national budget and the national effort. There will be a short period of transition in which our present retaliatory system, which I assume to be invulnerable under present conditions, must be appropriately altered to meet the time when the airplane no longer functions. I have no doubt it will be, provided the people of the United States understand the realities of the situation. A thermonuclear stalemate even in the age of rockets is, therefore, the prospect which we must keep in mind. Unfortunately, the creation of a truly invulnerable retaliatory system by no means completes the military picture. There is another item of equal priority on the list. We must continue to maintain for the foreseeable future a strong, modern, flexible military force which could respond to local aggression any-

where on the far-flung frontiers of freedom. And this military force should be thought of in terms of the total effort of the free peoples of the world to protect their freedom. This is so obvious that one would hardly think that the need for keeping NATO strong, for example, would require argument today. One would have thought that the experience of World War II, jet planes, and now intercontinental rockets would have destroyed the last residue of isolationist sentiment in the United States, but I am sorry to say that is far from being so. There still remains in some quarters the illusion that we can withdraw from Europe and leave the Europeans to handle their own problems—military, economic, and political.

Opponents of foreign aid—and those who are primarily worried about either the budget or the flow of gold—come up from time to time with the idea that we should withdraw our troops from the Continent of Europe. There surely must be other methods of handling the serious problems of budget and fiscal policy without considering an action which would soon destroy the NATO alliance, built up with so much effort. Even a slight diminution in the American forces would have the gravest consequences, as Europeans would interpret such a move as the first step in a complete withdrawal.

I am sure that everyone in this audience is aware of the report made by the President's Committee to Study the Military Assistance Program, usually known as the Draper Committee. I recommend their report to every thoughtful citizen, or, if time does not permit a reading of the entire document, the little

pamphlet entitled "The Time Has Come To Face The Facts," prepared by the Committee to Strengthen the Frontiers of Freedom, of which Dr. Vannevar Bush is Chairman and President Henry Wriston Vice-Chairman. The detailed problems there discussed are of extreme importance, including our aid to uncommitted nations, but basically the problem is: Shall we or shall we not regard the free world as an entity whose frontiers must be kept secure? To ask the question is to answer it, it seems to me. In considering all our problems—financial, industrial, political, and military—it surely is of the first importance that there be constant communication not only between the NATO member countries but between those statesmen responsible for the government of all the free peoples of the world.

It will take the wisdom of our best statesmen, economists, and industrialists to keep the free world prosperous and politically united. It will take the best brains of our military in the free countries working together and with the cooperation of scientists, engineers, and civilian strategists to provide both the invulnerable retaliatory system to which I earlier referred and the powerful flexible forces to handle threats of limited military aggression in different areas of the world. To quote from the Draper report which I have just mentioned: "The free world is gravely threatened by the aggressive onslaught of a powerful and determined opponent—the Sino-Soviet Communist Bloc. There is no precedent in history for the enormity of the threat." If this be true, as I believe it surely is, then there should be a corresponding response on the part of the American

people—a response so vigorous and unflinching as to be without precedent in times of peace.

Fundamentally, the real issue will be decided, to my mind, by the attitude of the people of the free nations and particularly by the citizens of the United States, for we must play the leading role because we are the largest and most powerful country that stands in opposition to the Communist doctrine. Complacency and indifference will certainly not suffice. In World War I, in World War II, and in the time of the Korean War (though to a less degree) we were ready to make the sacrifices required to maintain our independence as a nation and the basic framework of a system of free men. It is difficult in this time of struggle, but not of war, to create the climate of opinion which should be comparable in its effect. It is difficult but not impossible. To be sure, there exists, today, a dangerous gap between public opinion and reality. But I am confident that the gap can and will be closed. Indeed, to believe otherwise would be to become a defeatist as to the ability of a representative form of government to survive. As I have already pointed out, it is the complexities of the problems and the rapid changes since the end of World War II which have confused so many citizens.

As to weaponry, we may well be nearing the end of the period of rapid change. The age of rockets and thermonuclear bombs is near at hand, and, as we approach this dread time, away from which we instinctively turn our eyes—as we approach this time, we are getting bolder. There are some signs that we are preparing to face up courageously to realities.

Clearly what we are concerned with is a series of educational problems, but I must resist the temptation to pursue this topic further. Otherwise, I should start talking about schools, colleges, and various agencies of adult education. And I stated at the outset I was not going to talk about education. Yet, perhaps in a sense I have been speaking about this very subject.

At all events, let me conclude as I began by thanking the Trustees of this Foundation for the honor they have done me. I am sure they will agree that in this country, education and freedom are inseparable. And I venture to hope they may also agree that the defense of freedom may appropriately be discussed by one who receives an award carrying the name of a great educator and farseeing statesman, a war-time President of the United States—Woodrow Wilson.